

FIRE FAX

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FROM THE DESK OF



John Ticer
President

All, I hope this issue of Fire Fax finds you well and enjoying the beginning of the summer season in Iowa. With warmer temperatures comes increased dangers of heat related illness on our fire scenes, so make sure to hydrate well before and during your scene examinations and make time to take breaks out of the sun. If you have that nice light complexion like I do, don't forget the sunblock.

I recently returned from the International Conference that was held in Jacksonville, Florida. The conference venue was nice and we had some really good speakers, but if I'm being honest, I left Florida with a real appreciation for our state conference and how it has been run over the past nearly 40 years. Past presidents and their boards have done an excellent job of venue and speaker selection during that time, and I cannot say thank you enough for what they have done and the tradition they have left for us to try and carry on.

Some of the speakers at the International Conference and their topics have been identified as being a good fit for our Iowa Conference, so we are already working on a class lineup for the 2023 conference. One of the speakers, International President Randy Watson, is already on this year's agenda. Randy will be covering updates to NFPA 921 and 1033, as well as addressing the newest document still in the development phase, NFPA 1321, Standards for Fire Investigation Units. This document, which will probably be out in the

next 18 months or so, will have an impact on our industry regardless of whether you are a public or private investigator. In addition to Randy being the International President, he is also the immediate Past Chair of the NFPA 921 Committee, member of the NFPA 1033 Committee and the current Chair of the NFPA 1321 Committee. I cannot emphasize enough the importance of our membership and their employers attending this year's conference to hear Randy's presentation.

This year's conference is being held centrally located in Johnston at the Stoney Creek Inn and Convention Center September 13-15. We hope to have the brochure for the conference out to the membership by the end of June, so you can begin planning. We have moved up the times for training on the first day (Tuesday). Rather than having evening classes, we are trying something new and starting class right after lunch (on your own). This will allow time in the morning for those who must travel but still have them out of class at a respectable hour. We have also secured a very favorable room rate of \$76 per night. My hope is that this lower rate will allow employers to send more people to training without the burden of high room cost. A link to reserve rooms will be in the brochure. Make sure to have your reservations completed by August 22nd to guarantee this rate. Registering early for the conference is also important to your board. Decisions concerning things like food and beverage are dictated by how many we believe will attend. Some of those deadlines occur in early August, so if at all possible, please try to register early. Any registration received after September 2nd will be billed at the non-member rate. Stay safe and hope to see everyone in September!

FROM THE DESK OF



Mark Dooley
Treasurer

What are we doing to stay safe?

As I was reminded again this week that I needed to submit my article for the Spring Firefax, I honestly wondered what I was going to present. I just reviewed the last two articles I had written and looked over some of the material that I was presented with at the International ITC a month ago, and I wondered, what can I share? Then I thought, as I often do, keep it basic. What is the first thing that we as fire investigators, public or private, need to do at every scene? The first thing is our safety. If we don't take care of ourselves, it doesn't matter what we do at the scene. This begins with the simple things.

We need to be aware that the weather is changing. We need to realize that working in these higher temperatures

we will need to take appropriate breaks and hydrate with water. If we can't complete the investigation, we cannot come to a conclusion.

The next thing is we need to take care of ourselves in the short term. At every one of the investigations we attend there are slip, trip and fall hazards. I can personally attest to the fact that we should always account for overhead hazards and protect our heads. Yes, since my past article I did not account for a change in the environment, did not don a hard hat, and ended up with six staples in my head after the laceration was cleaned. So, wear the proper footwear and gloves to protect against debris and wear a hard hat and eyewear to protect against items that could be overhead or disturbed.

Finally, we need to be safe and take care of ourselves for the long term. As fire investigators, we face a higher probability of cancer than the members of society that are not in the fire service because of the constant exposure to carcinogens at the fire scene. Most of our cancers are absorption-based cancers, so be safe and protect yourself from those absorption-based exposures. The best practice is to wear long sleeves to protect against absorption through the skin and respiratory protection to protect our airway. Additionally, decontaminate and remove the clothes that you wear to investigate the fire at the scene and keep those clothes out of the passenger compartment of your vehicle. Shower as soon as possible to remove any contaminants that are on your skin.

FROM THE DESK OF



Nick Grossman
Director of Insurance

The job of a fire investigator is difficult. Let's be safe and not make it more difficult by having to deal with a short or long term injury. Hello, Iowa Chapter.

I wanted to take this time to introduce myself as your new Director of Insurance. While I am somewhat new to the fire investigation industry as a full-time job, I have worked alongside the fire service since the early 2000s. I've been a member of the Iowa Chapter since 2005 and an International member since 2019. I've long thought about joining the Board and when the opportunity arose last Fall, I was lucky enough to be nominated and voted in. I look forward to meeting (hopefully in person) and conversing with more of you in the future and truly believe in the power of networking. We're all on the same team, even if we play different positions. Training is second only to safety. I encourage all of you to join us at this year's annual

conference in Johnston. Should be some good, fun training for all to enjoy.

As for my background, aside from just under a decade in the US Army, I primarily come from the law enforcement side of the fence. I worked in Ames as a police officer for the Iowa State University Police Department for about 18 years, mostly with the patrol unit, though I spent about five years as a Detective. During that time, I served as the department's primary Fire & Arson Investigator. I attended the Basic Fire Investigations course at the FSTB in 2004 and the NFA Codes Inspection course in 2005. In 2006, I joined the Ames Fire Department's Fire Investigation Team, which I continued to serve on until leaving ISUPD in 2018, when I accepted my current position as an Investigator with Grinnell Mutual Reinsurance Company. This has been one of the most rewarding moves of my life from an occupational sense. I continue to learn more every day and as you all know, it's never a dull day when you're out on a fire scene!

I live in the Des Moines area with my wife and two daughters. I'm an ISU Alum (2001) and rabid fan, as well as being a fan of the SF 49ers in the NFL. Football season can get a bit dicey in our household as my wife is a Chiefs fan. My contact info is: nick.grossman@grinnellmutual.com. Please don't hesitate to contact me with any questions or issues.

FROM THE DESK OF



Chris VanVleet

**IAAI - 1st Vice President &
Iowa Chapter IAAI - Past
President and
Life Member**

I was asked to share with everyone a little about my journey with the IAAI. It all began back in 1992 when I joined the Iowa Chapter of the IAAI. This was shortly after I had been involved with a double firefighter fatality arson case in West Burlington, IA. I had just graduated from the ATF Academy in early December of 1989 when the fire occurred at the Ryan Fun and Fitness Center in West Burlington on January 1, 1990. I was assigned the case and with the help of many great investigators from the State Fire Marshal's Office, the DCI and the West Burlington PD, we were able to get a conviction for the arson that took two brave firefighters' lives. That is when the "bug bit me". I was hooked on fire investigation and started my specialization as a fire investigator.

I joined the International in 1994. I quickly realized the value of the IAAI to the fire investigation community. Not only does the IAAI provide great training and certifications, but it also provides a connection to an entire

network of resources for the fire investigator. Therefore, it was not hard for my counterparts in the Iowa Chapter to convince me to run for the Iowa Chapter Board.

I was elected to the Iowa Board as Director of Detection in 1997. I remained in that position until 2006 when I was elected as 2nd Vice President. In 2009 I moved into the 1st Vice President position and then in 2010 was elected as President of the Iowa Chapter. I was fortunate enough to remain as the Iowa Chapter President until 2013.

I had always contemplated running for the Board of Directors of the International. With the International serving as the “mothership” for all the chapters globally, I felt a desire to work on that board in an effort to help promote and hopefully make a positive impact on the global fire investigation community. I knew that it would probably be best for me if I waited until my Presidency with the Iowa Chapter was over so that I could focus my efforts on one board. I retired from ATF in 2014, and in 2015 I ran for and was elected to the International Board of Directors.

I quickly discovered that the International required more time than I thought. I was not aware of everything the board had to manage on an international scale. At the same time, I found it extremely enjoyable and rewarding. I have met new people from all over the world that have the same passion for this profession.

The International Board has a three-year term with a maximum of two terms. After the first two years it was obvious to me that I still had a lot to learn and that any ideas or concepts that I felt worthy of moving forward would take time. Like any organization, especially a volunteer organization, it takes time to accomplish goals. That’s when I decided to run for my second three-year term as a director.

The work of the International is extensive. From providing training across the world, to certifications, to publishing the *Fire and Arson Investigator Journal*, to running an office with paid staff in Maryland, the work is broad and challenging. As I neared the end of my second term, I decided to go all in and run for the position of Second Vice President.

As you may know, the International has an automatic ascension of offices. In other words, after being elected to 2nd VP, you move to 1st VP after the first year, then to President the next and finally Past President. These four positions make up the Executives of the International Board of Directors. This allows for another four years on the board. This year I am the 1st VP and I will be sworn in at the next Annual General Meeting in Cherokee, North Carolina, as President.

I am looking forward to my remaining years on the board and I am hopeful that we can make a positive difference for our membership. There have been many great Presidents before me, and I hope to continue in their footsteps and progressively move this Association forward in an effort to make fire investigators and investigations better every day.

2022 Iowa IAAI Seminar

Join us for the 2022 Iowa IAAI Fire Investigation Seminar & Annual Meeting at the Stoney Creek Hotel, Johnston, IA from September 13-15, 2022. Please watch your emails and our website for updates. www.iowaiaaichapter.org

Recent Recalls

MTD Products Recalls Troy-Bilt Spacesavr Walk-Behind Self-Propelled Lawn Mowers Due to Fire Hazard



Hazard:

The mower can leak fuel when it is stored in the upright (vertical) storage position, posing a fire hazard.

Remedy:

Consumers should stop using the mower, store the mower horizontally only and contact the store where purchased or Troy-Bilt to receive a full refund.

Units:

About 1,774

Consumer Contact:

Website: https://www.troybilt.com/en_US/recall-space-saver-mower-2022.html

Phone: (888) 848-6038

[SunVilla™ Corporation Recalls Solar LED Market Umbrellas Due to Fire and Burn Hazards; Sold Exclusively at Costco \(Recall Alert\)](#)



Hazard:

The lithium-ion batteries in the umbrella’s solar panels can overheat, posing fire and burn hazards.

Remedy:

Consumers should immediately stop using the umbrellas, remove the solar panel puck containing a lithium-ion battery from the top of the umbrella, store the puck out of the sun and away from combustible material, and do not charge the puck with the AC adapter.

Consumers can return the umbrellas and solar puck to any Costco Warehouse nationwide for a full refund. Consumers unable to return the product to Costco can contact the firm for instructions on how to receive a refund. SunVilla and Costco are contacting all known purchasers.

Units:

About 400,000 (In addition, about 33,000 in Canada)

Consumer Contact:

Website: <https://sunvilla.com/pages/recall>

E-mail: LEDRecall@sunvilla.com

Phone: (866) 600-3133

[Sienhua Group Recalls WarmWave and Hunter Ceramic Tower Heaters Due to Fire and Burn Hazards](#)



Hazard:

The ceramic tower heater's cord and plug can overheat when in use, posing fire and burn hazards.

Remedy:

Consumers should immediately stop using the recalled heaters, unplug the unit, and follow the instructions online at (www.homeproductservice.com/recall) on how to properly sever the electrical cord to make the unit unusable, and contact the distributor, Sienhua Group (North America), to receive a prorated refund.

Units:

About 580,000 (In addition, about 37,580 in Canada)

Consumer Contact:

Website: <http://www.homeproductservice.com/recall>

E-mail: 18inCeramicHeaterRecall@gmail.com

Phone: (800) 267-7857

[Polaris Recalls RZR Recreational Off-Road Vehicles Due to Fire Hazard \(Recall Alert\)](#)



Hazard:

An incorrectly routed battery cable can contact the prop shaft during use, which can result in an electrical short, posing a fire hazard.

Remedy:

Consumers should immediately stop using the recalled vehicles and contact a Polaris dealer to schedule a free inspection and repair. The dealer will re-route the battery cable, and if needed, replace it free of charge. Polaris has notified consumers to stop riding the vehicles and is contacting registered owners directly to provide more details about the repair.

Units:

About 1,160 (In addition, about 11 were sold in Canada)

Consumer Contact:

Website: <http://www.polaris.com>

Phone: (800) 765-2747

[Best Buy Recalls Insignia™ Air Fryers and Air Fryer Ovens Due to Fire and Burn Hazards](#)



Hazard:

The air fryers and air fryer ovens can overheat, posing fire and burn hazards.

Remedy:

Consumers should immediately stop using the recalled air fryers and air fryer ovens and register online at www.insigniaairfryerrecall.expertinquiry.com or call Best Buy at 800-566-7498 from 8 a.m. to 5 p.m. ET Monday through Friday to arrange a return through a pre-paid shipping box and label and return instructions. Best Buy is also contacting all known purchasers directly to arrange returns. The consumer should not return the recalled air fryers and air fryer ovens to a Best Buy retail store for a refund. The consumer will receive a refund in the form of a credit for use at Best Buy stores or Bestbuy.com. Consumers will receive a credit of \$50 or the amount on the purchase receipt if higher. Consumers do not need a purchase receipt to get the \$50 credit.

Units:

About 635,000 (In addition, 137,000 in Canada)

Consumer Contact:

Website: <http://www.insigniaairfryerrecall.expertinquiry.com>

Phone: (800) 566-7498

This is not an all-inclusive list of recent recalls. Please refer to <https://www.cpsc.gov/Recalls> with the products that you are researching.

The opinions expressed in this publication are not necessarily those of the IAAI or the Iowa Chapter IAAI.

Contact information:

David Miller

Grinnell Mutual Reinsurance Company

4215 HWY 146

Grinnell, IA 50112

800-362-2041 ext. 8265

David.Miller@GrinnellMutual.com

**This edition of Firefox was presented by
David Miller, 2nd Vice President**

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